

TOWN OF ARLINGTON
TOWN MEETING ELECTRONIC VOTING STUDY COMMITTEE

September 27, 2012

Call to Order

The organizational meeting of the Town Meeting Electronic Voting Study Committee was called to order by Temporary Chair John Leone in the Selectmen's Hearing Room in Town Hall on September 27, 2012, at 7:35 PM. The notice calling this meeting is appended to these minutes.

Quorum

A quorum was present: John Leone, Wes Beal, Adam Auster, Alan Jones, Steve Storch, Raymond Charbonneau III, and Eric Helmuth.

Introductions

The members present introduced themselves.

Election of Officers

MOTION:

Election of Chair

John Leone moved to elect Eric Helmuth as committee chair.

The motion passed.

MOTION:

*Election of
Secretary*

Eric Helmuth moved to elect Adam Auster as secretary.

The motion passed.

New Business

Reports

Eric Helmuth said that he first became interested in electronic voting when he learned Chelmsford's experience with the technology at its town meeting.

Arlington STM

He noted that Arlington will have a special town meeting on October 10 and invited committee members who are not Town Meeting members to come and observe how Town Meeting works today.

Committee Charge

John Leone drew the attention of the Committee to the Town Meeting resolution establishing this committee and to the suggested charge to the Committee recommended by the Town Meeting Procedures Committee.

MOTION:
*Recommended
Charge*

Wes Beal moved to accept the charge of the Town Meeting Procedures Committee.

The motion passed.

*Option
Technologies*

Mr. Helmuth said that Option Technologies is the leading provider of electronic vote tallying at town meetings, but that the market is growing.

The Option Technologies product is integrated with PowerPoint, he said, and requires a projector and an operator skilled with PowerPoint.

The product uses hand-held radio-frequency devices to transmit votes, he said, with several options.

Mr. Helmuth explained that cheaper hand-held devices only transmit and are less secure. The higher-end devices establish a secure connection and confirm to the user that the vote has been received.

He said that the product is configurable in many ways, such as delayed display or real-time totals, and totals only or individual names paired with votes.

The cheaper devices could be faked or forged, he said.

Brookline STM

Mr. Leone noted that Brookline, which is starting to use this technology, has scheduled a special town meeting from November 13. He said that Brookline's moderator has invited the committee to attend and observe.

Framingham STM

Mr. Helmuth said that the Framingham Town Meeting, which uses this technology, also has a fall meeting scheduled.

*Option
Technologies*

He said that the vendor, Option Technologies, is also available for a demonstration.

Mr. Helmuth said that Option Technologies will either sell or lease the system; leasing comes with staff support. He said that the larger towns have opted for the lease.

*Town Technology
Officer*

Mr. Leone said that David Good, the Town's chief technology officer, is interested in attending future committee meetings.

MOTION:
Next Meeting

Raymond Charbonneau moved:

To meet in two weeks at the same time and place and in the interim two weeks investigate other vendors.

The motion passed.

MOTION TO ADJOURN Raymond Charbonneau moved to adjourn.

The motion passed.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM.

APPROVED
October 11, 2012

Adam Auster, *Secretary*

Town Meeting Electronic Voting Study Committee

John D. Leone – Temporary Chair

Thursday, September 27th, 2012, 7:30 p.m.

Selectmen's Hearing Room – Second Floor Town Hall

AGENDA:

- 1 - Call meeting to Order;
- 2 - Introduction of Members;
- 3 - Election of Chair and Secretary;
- 4 - Discussion of Charge to Committee and Town Meeting Vote Establishing Committee;
- 5 - Discussion of current state of technology;
- 6 - New Business;
- 7 - Set future meeting schedule;
- 8 - Adjournment.

FOR REFERENCE ONLY:

ARTICLE 22 ESTABLISH COMMITTEE TO STUDY ELECTRONIC VOTING FOR TOWN MEETING: which seeks to establish a committee of Town Meeting to be appointed by the Moderator to study electronic voting for Town Meeting, determine a charge to the committee as to its responsibility and duties;.

VOTED: That the Town hereby establishes a committee, not larger than seven (7) members to be appointed by the Moderator, for the purpose of studying electronic voting and to report back to and make recommendations to future Town Meetings.

CHARGE: The Committee shall study and make recommendations to a future Town Meeting on whether the Town should adopt electronic voting, when the electronic devices shall be used, in what situations, and for what purposes. It will also study what devices are available, the costs and benefits of the devices and the security features available, as well as what procedures and Bylaws would need to be implemented and changed.